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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY

East Germany

628066

DATE DISTR.

7 September 1954

SUBJECT

Conversion of Boiler Furnaces to Raw Lignite
and Dry Coal

NO. OF PAGES

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1. In mid-March 1954, investigations on the conversion of boiler furnaces to raw lignite and dry coal. were made at the East German Ministry of Heavy Industry in the field of electric energy. As a result of these investigations it was expected at the Ministry of Heavy Industry that a saving of 1,980,000 tons of lignite briquettes, including 1,940,000 tons in the energy section would be effected. The increase in the consumption of raw lignite and dry coal would be 13,800,000 tons. This conversion to raw lignite and dry coal burning would require an investment of 172,000,000 East marks.

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2. Source was of the opinion that these plans could not be realized. In addition, the conversion to burning lignite in the energy sector alone could not be completed until the 1960's. The critical situation in the field of lignites resulted from the breaking of contracts on the part of people's democracies, especially Poland.

3. On 16 March 1954, Professor Dr. Leibnitz (fnu) of the Institute of Organic Chemistry in Leipzig, read a paper before the Technology Commission of the Ministry of Heavy Industry in which he sharply criticized the absurd waste of raw lignite which one day may be the most essential European raw material. Although it is hoped that atomic energy will become available eventually, lignite would be indispensable for the production of all kinds of plastics which, in view of the excessive exploitation of coal deposits may not be available in the future. He attacked the present tendencies to utilize lignite in East Germany and the exploitation of the West German coal mines by the European Coal and Steel Pool, stating that these tendencies would weaken the German coal potential. He mentioned the USA, the USSR and China as the richest countries in coal, countries which, moreover, would be in possession of atomic energy in the near future, whereas Germany and even the whole of Europe would be soon entirely at the mercy of these powers. His lecture was enthusiastically applauded by those present including a large number of representatives of the organic chemical industry because the conversion of the furnaces to burning lignite as decreed by the Council of Ministers, was generally disliked, and because all warnings against the squandering of valuable lignite have remained unheeded.

Comment. The present report supplements previous information.

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